

Economic Security Report of Employment and Earnings Outcomes of Kentucky's Graduates from Public Postsecondary Educational Institutions

This report provides students, parents, and others with employment and earnings outcomes for levels of education and selected certificate and degree programs. This tool may be used to inform students' academic and professional decision making.

More Education, More Money

More education tends to relate to an increase in wages when looked at as a whole. This wage increase becomes more pronounced after several years in the field.

Chart 1: Median Earnings in Kentucky in FY 2014-15

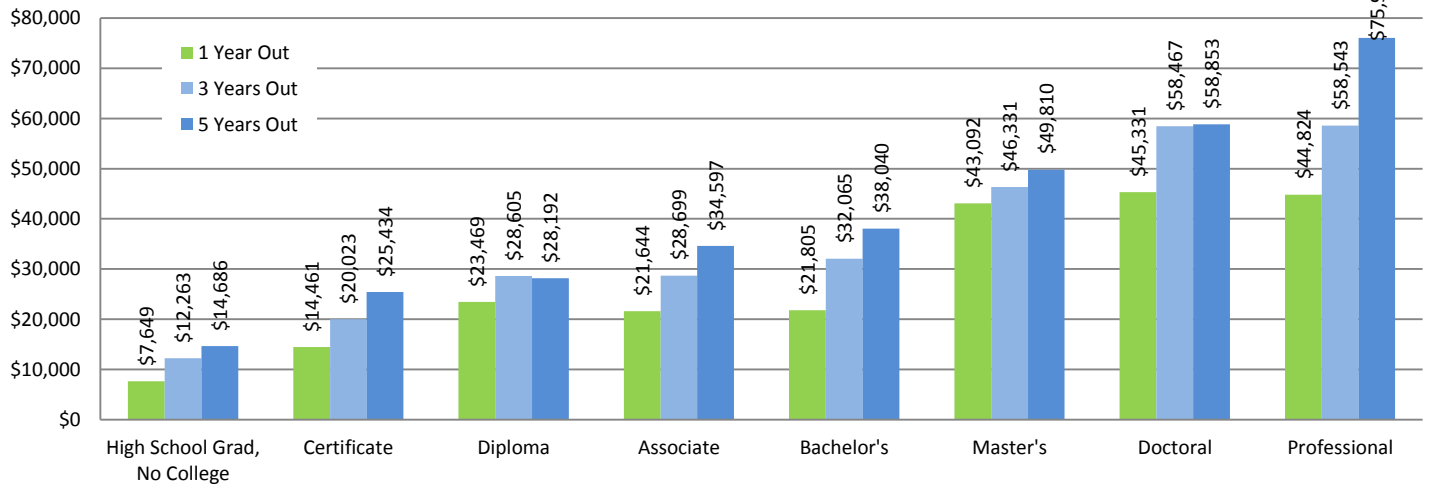


Chart 1: Median Earnings in Kentucky in FY 2014-2015. Median earnings represent total wages earned in fiscal year 2014-15 by completers in 2013-14 (one year out), 2011-12 (three years out), and 2009-10 (five years out). College degrees/credentials are based on the highest level earned in each year, which means a graduate can only be included once in each degree year, but can be included in multiple degree years if degrees/credentials were earned in multiple years. Median earnings are reported only for those graduates employed in a firm covered by the Kentucky Unemployment Insurance System. The "High School Graduate, No College" category includes Kentucky public high school graduates of 2013-14, 2011-12, and 2009-10 who never enrolled in college through 2014-15.

Chart 2: Median First Year Earnings in FY 2014-15 for Degrees in Selected Academic Areas

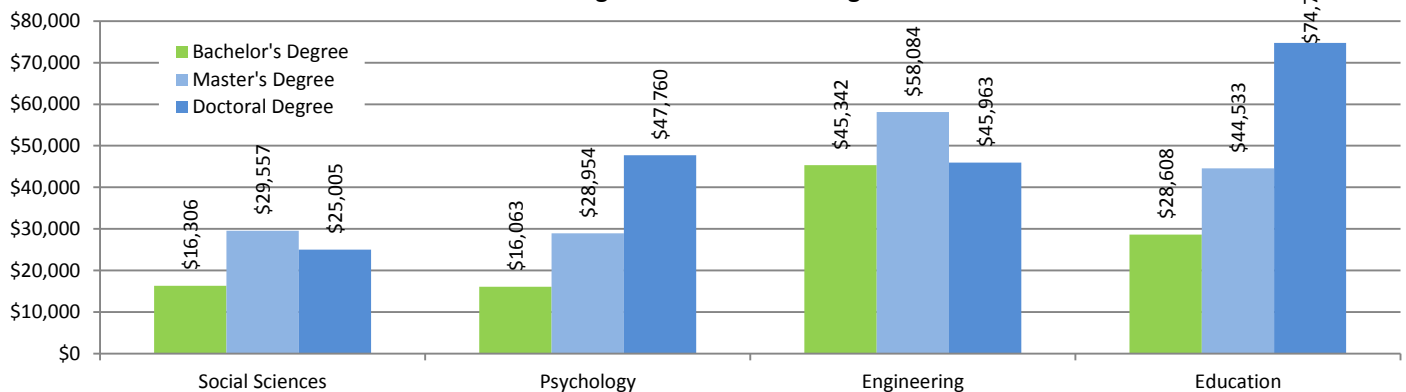


Chart 2: Median First Year Earnings in FY 2014-15 for Degrees in Selected Academic Areas. Median earnings represent total wages earned in fiscal year 2014-15 by completers in 2013-14 (one year out). College degrees/credentials are based on the highest level earned in 2013-14, which means a graduate can be included only once. Median earnings are reported only for those graduates employed in a firm covered by the Kentucky Unemployment Insurance System. Only academic areas/degree levels with at least 10 graduates employed in Kentucky in fiscal year 2014-15 are included in this chart.

Degree Level versus Degree Program

First year earnings for graduates of associate's, bachelor's, and master's degree programs vary considerably. The below earnings are for graduates who did not pursue additional education after completing their degree. Keep in mind that graduates of degree programs have varying levels of work experience which factor into their annual earnings.

Chart 3: Top 15 KY Associate Degree Programs by FY 2014-15 First Year Median Earnings

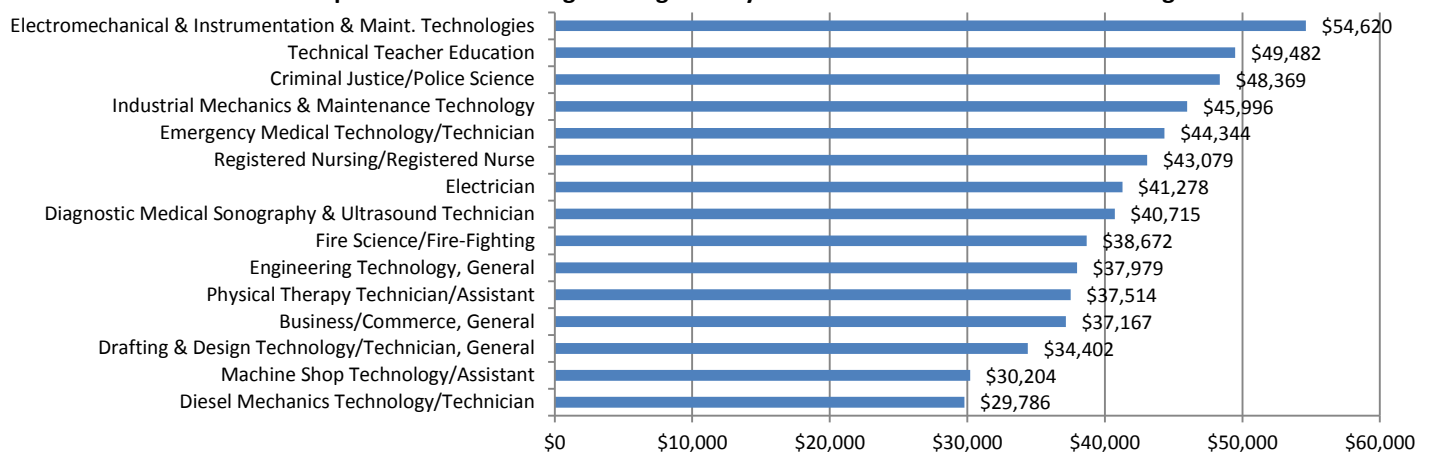


Chart 4: Top 15 KY Bachelor's Degree Programs by FY 2014-15 First Year Median Earnings

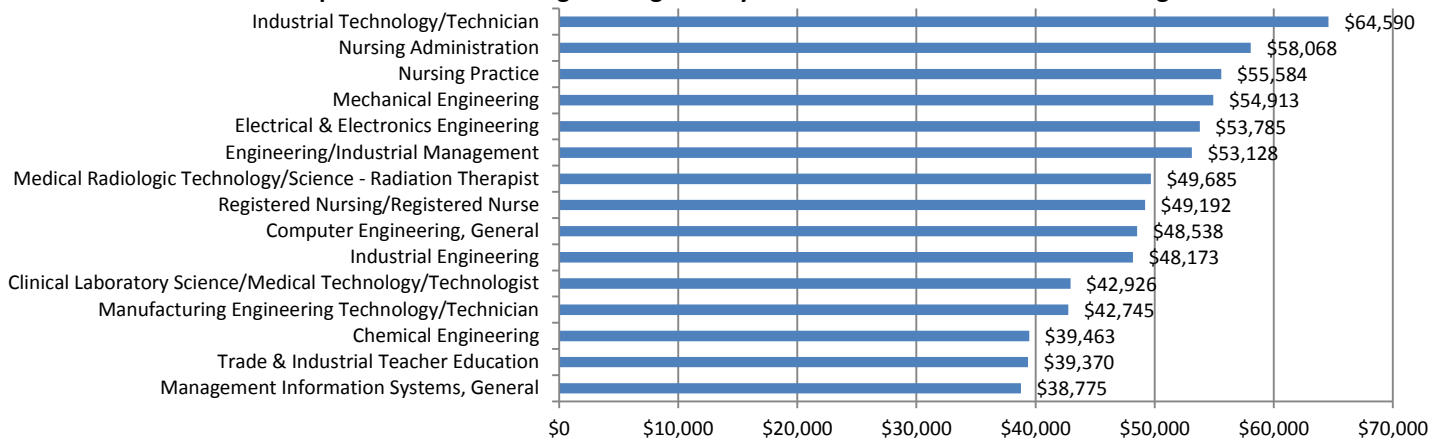
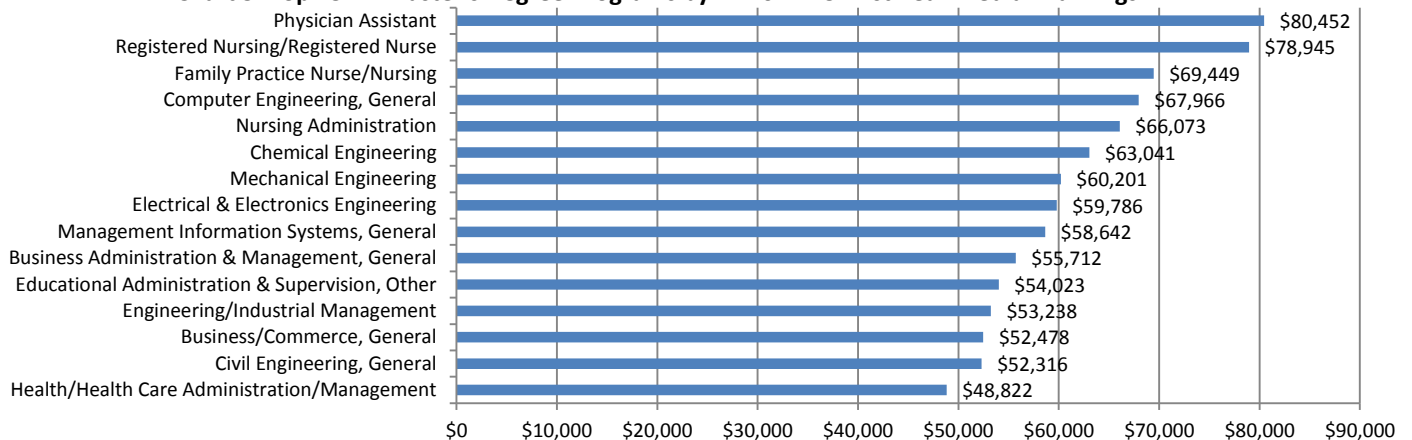


Chart 5: Top 15 KY Master's Degree Programs by FY 2014-15 First Year Median Earnings



Charts 3, 4, and 5: Top Kentucky Degree Programs by FY 2014-15 First Year Median Earnings. Median earnings represent total wages earned in fiscal year 2014-15 by completers in 2013-14 (one year out). College degrees/credentials are based on the highest level earned in 2013-14, which means a graduate can be included only once. Median earnings are reported only for those graduates employed in a firm covered by the Kentucky Unemployment Insurance System. Only academic areas/degree levels with at least 10 graduates employed in Kentucky in fiscal year 2014-15 are included in this chart.

Summary

The selection of an educational and career path is a personal choice, depending on many factors such as personality, skills, and interests. An additional consideration once a career has been selected is the amount of education needed to acquire the necessary skills for this career. Someone who desires a career as a psychologist will need to acquire a Bachelor's as a first stepping stone in this pathway, using this as a requirement before pursuing the graduate degree needed for this career. In contrast, someone who wishes to be an engineer can practice this career upon completion of a Bachelor's degree. Knowing the educational requirements and common wage outcomes of a particular career can help individuals make successful choices about their future.